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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/780,463	02/17/2004	Phillip Clark	MCA-640 CIP/US	1395
<div>25182 7590 07/24/2007 MILLIPORE CORPORATION 290 CONCORD ROAD BILLERICA, MA 01821</div>				
			EXAMINER AKRAM, IMRAN	
			ART UNIT 1709	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 07/24/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/780,463

Applicant(s)

CLARK ET AL.

Examiner

Imran Akram

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– The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address –

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 February 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-33 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 17-31 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16, 32 and 33 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-33 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 February 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 1/23/06, 5/6/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-16, 32, and 33, drawn to a manifold assembly, classified in class 422, subclass 100.
 - II. Claims 17-31, drawn to a method of applying vacuum to a manifold device, classified in class 436, subclass 180.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions I and II are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process: for example, a vacuum source does not need to be used for sealing engagement of the manifold or a positive pressure can be applied to the apparatus as claimed.

3. Restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper because all these inventions listed in this action are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and there would be a serious search and examination burden if restriction were not required because one or more of the following reasons apply:

- (a) the inventions have acquired a separate status in the art in view of their different classification;

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- (b) the inventions have acquired a separate status in the art due to their recognized divergent subject matter;
- (c) the inventions require a different field of search (for example, searching different classes/subclasses or electronic resources, or employing different search queries);
- (d) the prior art applicable to one invention would not likely be applicable to another invention;
- (e) the inventions are likely to raise different non-prior art issues under 35 U.S.C. 101 and/or 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a invention to be examined even though the requirement may be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

The election of an invention may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse. Traversal must be presented at the time of election in order to be considered timely. Failure to timely traverse the requirement will result in the loss of right to petition under 37 CFR 1.144. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which of these claims are readable on the elected invention.

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If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which of these claims are readable upon the elected invention.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

4. During a telephone conversation with John Hubbard on 7/11/07 a provisional election was made without traverse to prosecute the invention of group I, claims 1-16, 32, and 33. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 17-31 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

5. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

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A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1-8, 11-16, 32, and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Moring et al. (6,159,368).
3. Regarding claims 1, 2, 6, 7, and 11-15, Moring teaches a multiwell microfiltration apparatus for filtering samples. The device is best shown in Figures 3 and 4 and described in columns 12-14. The device of Moring has a first sample processing device (filter plate #10), a second processing device (receiving plate #24) stacked below the first processing device, a collar (38), a base (51) having a vacuum port (51), a first seal (gasket #44) between the collar and base, and a second seal (gasket #42) between the first sample processing device and the collar.
4. Regarding claims 3-5, 32, and 33, collection plates (column 12), flow directors (column 17, lines 48-53), and support plates (column 34) are disclosed by Moring.
5. Regarding claim 8, the Examiner considers a deformable gasket (col. 14, lines 28-30) as allowing for variability in the height of the processing devices since it may be deformed.
6. Claims 1-3, 5-8, 11-16, 32, and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Stanchfield et al. (6,054,100).

7. Regarding claims 1-3, 5-7, 11-16, 32, and 33, Stanchfield teaches a multiwell microfiltration apparatus for filtering samples. The device is best shown in Figures 12 and 13 and described in columns 12-14. The device of Stanchfield has a first sample processing device (well block #12), a second processing device (collection plate #123) stacked below the first processing device, a collar (104), a base (102) having a vacuum port (120), a first seal (gasket #106) between the collar and base, and a second seal (gasket #108) between the first sample processing device and the collar.

8. Regarding claim 8, the Examiner considers the use of a gasket between elements of the device as an element that allows for variability in the height of the processing devices since it may be deformed.

9. Claims 1-9, 11-16, 32, and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Bloecker et al. (6,592,826).

10. Regarding claims 1, 2, 6, 7, and 11-16, Bloecker teaches a multiwell microfiltration apparatus for filtering samples. The device is best shown in Figures 2, 4, 7 and 8 and described in columns 7-8. The device of Bloecker has a first sample processing device (upper support #F1), a second processing device (lower support #F2) stacked below the first processing device, a collar (cover #30), a base (#1) having vacuum ports (7,8), a first seal (gasket #16) between the collar and base, and a second seal (gasket #44) between the first sample processing device and the collar.

11. Regarding claims 3-5, 32, and 33, filter plates (column 2, lines 59-67) and collection plates and spacers (column 3, lines 21-37) are disclosed by Bloecker.

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12. Regarding claim 8, the Examiner considers the use of a gasket between elements of the device as an element that allows for variability in the height of the processing devices since it may be deformed.

13. Regarding claim 9, Bloecker discloses a collar wherein said first seal is created with a gasket positioned with the base, said sealing being along the substantially vertical side walls of said collar (column 6, lines 23-45 and figure 3).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

14. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

15. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

16. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation

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under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

17. Claims 4, 32, and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bloecker et al. (6,592,826) or Stanchfield et al. (6,054,100) or Moring et al. (6,159,368) in view of Vestal (5,498,545). Bloecker or Stanchfield or Moring, as described above teach every element of claim 4 except for a MALDI device as the second device. Vestal teaches a mass spectrometer system for analyzing multiple samples. The system includes a sample plate (10A) for holding the samples on pins in the wells of the plate. The samples are loaded into the plate and then analyzed. It would have been obvious to combine the plate of Vestal with the device of Bloecker or Stanchfield or Moring. One would use the plate of Vestal as the collection plate in order to load the collection plate for MALDI analysis of the samples.

Double Patenting

18. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct

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from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

19. Claims 1-16, 32, and 33 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-4 and 6-15 of copending Application No. 10/602,426. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because Application No. 10/602,426's claims anticipate applicant's claims: Claims 1 and 5 (of reference) anticipate claim 1 (of application); claim 2 anticipates claim 2; claim 3 anticipates claim 5, claim 4 anticipates

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claims 4, 32, and 33; claims 6-11 anticipate claims 6-11, respectively; and claims 12-15 anticipate claims 13-16, respectively.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Imran Akram whose telephone number is 571-270-3241. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-6 Monday through Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Walter Griffin can be reached on 571-272-1447. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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IA

Walter D. Griffin

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SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER